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ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM UNDER THE CALIPHATE OF IMAM ALI (A.S)

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Abstract

Whoever has the intention to deny with the virtues of Imam Ali A.S as they were blessed to him by the Almighty Allah. The historians have only unfolded the truth of Imam Ali A.S as a brave hero and his act of velour but his qualities and abilities were more than to the boundaries of their wit. Imam Ali A.S under his rule (Caliphate) proved himself as a great administrator and statesman. He has marked his virtues by his abilities and use of knowledge to the ever-remaining world. Under this paper an analytical striving has been made to enlighten the world with the virtue of Imam Ali A.S as a great jurist, statesman, administrator, general or commander in chief and governing head of the state. The primary focus of this study limited but not bound to administrative abilities of the great Imam Ali A.S and secondarily, focuses on the imposition of the just system. The study will also uncover the structural roots of the administrative system imposed and the changes made in the preceding systems of the Caliphate (The Rashidun Caliphate) in the best interest of the fulfilment of state prosperity. The paper also discusses the mode of distribution of authorities and checks-in and out according to the Sharia Principles i.e., The Holy Quran and Sunnah. The study is kept as qualitative and references from sacred books has been taken to draw inferences in rightful way. As the topic is typical in nature, it is strived to check every reference sharply and then come to any point.

Keywords: Holy Quran, Imam Ali (A. S.), Caliph, Administrative System, Sharia Principles

Introduction

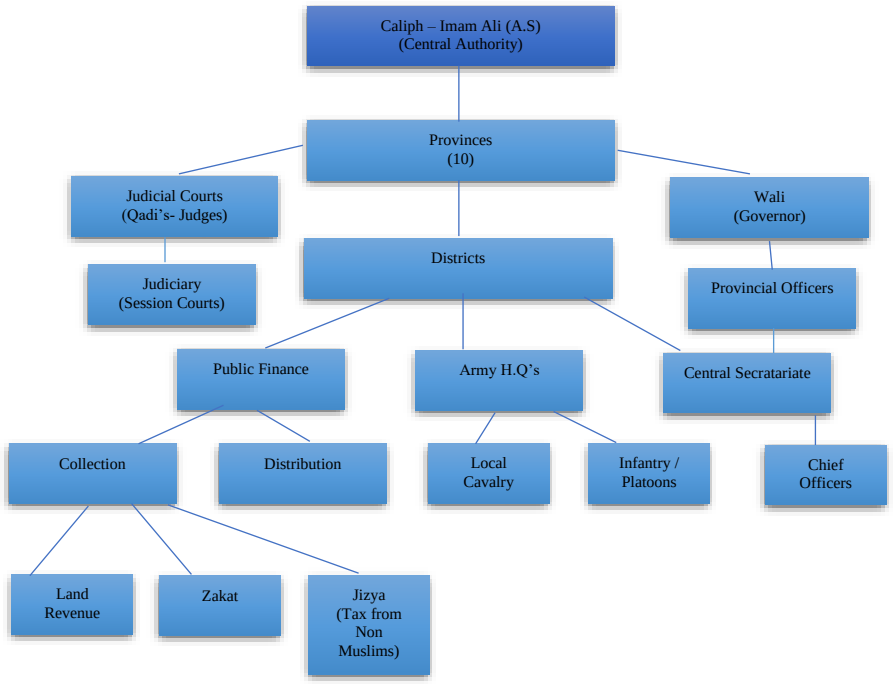
"Of Lords Grace! I have the great knowledge of conveying messages, keeping the promises and the correct interpretation of the Divine Revelations. We the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) possess the doors of knowledge and cognition and the enlighten ways of sharia". (Hussain)

Of every governing system there is a keen need of able leadership to implement the theories of successful system. Thus, Leader of the Faithful (Imam) has been revealed to keep the believers on the rightful track, socially, politically, economically and culturally. The systems aren't itself work full, but it is able leadership that made it successful through rightful implementation of laws, theries and practices.

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Imam Ali (A.S) governing and administrative system proved as the most successful among the preceding systems of Rashidun Caliphate. Although, the imposed system did not offer any major change but of rightful implementation and importance to rightful owners of places. Imam Ali (A.S) prefer "Theocracy"[1] (Hosein Golchini, 2016 (01)) instead of imposing the laws of simple democracy. As referred to above citation Quran and Sunnah and the chosen one who has the supremacy on interpretation of Divine Principles i.e. (Imam) are the key sources of Divine guidance.

It is not a thumb rule that Islam does not prefer Democracy except it proposes one step ahead more superior form of governing system as stated above. Justice is the common source in both theocracy and democracy, but the religious democracy demands accountability from the ruler with just imposition of the policies. (Nadeem-ud-din, 2015). Imam Ali (A.S) in his own statement expresses his feelings about the rightful democratic ruler: "Alas! if it were not for piety, I would have been the shrewdest Arab". (Reshahari) Thus, in this context the proposition and imposition of type of governing system as guided by the Holy Book Quran from Imam Ali (A.S). a type of democracy that inherit the decentralization at the lower level to keep the public representatives accountable to the public.



(Retrieve from https://www.al-islam.org/imam-ali-ass-book-government-ayatullah-muhammadi-rayshahri/chapter-three-administrative-policies

[1] Theocracy – a government run by divine guidance and principles.

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Imam Ali (A.S) distributed the authorities as per above figure into districts of provinces presided by the head (Caliph) and the districts were accountable to provinces which governed by appointed Amir or Wali (Governor). Each province has districts in its jurisdiction and appointed officers who were accountable to Provincial head and provincial heads to Caliph. Each province was comprised of four basic divisions' i.e. Public finance, Judiciary and Army headquarters and provincial secretariat. Public Finance department was further divided into two parts i.e. Collection and Distribution. And likewise, collection was distributed into three divisions i.e. Land revenue, Zakat and Jizya tax. Judicial Courts were setup in every province and session courts in district run by appointed Qadi's. Army Headquarters were distinguished into two parts i.e. infantry / platoons (responsible for guarding the boundaries) and Local cavalries for guarding the internal state affairs and boundaries. However, the system of Police (originated and imposed in the era of second Caliph) was kept active and upgraded to provide security to the locals. (Reshahari)

Based on above mentioned heads of Imam Ali (A.S) administrative system it was a just democratic system with religious role on top of its priority. Many scholars and well versed personalities has been in a suggestion of his (Imam Ali – A.S) system as a just democratic system that ensure the welfare of poor at first and deal everyone in its state with equity and justice. (https://www.imamali.net/?id=2487, n.d.) However, the anti-democratic alliances had been the major hindrance in the way of Imam Ali (A.S) system imposition, distribution of authorities and wealth as they (Elites) enjoyed favored living in the previous system and due to this they were the threat of uprising against such a just system. One of Imam Follower (Usman ibn Hunayf) also expresses this threat in front of Imam Ali (A.S). (https://www.imamali.net/?id=2487, n.d.). It was the first regime when a proper accounting system was installed for the collection and distribution of revenues collected from different heads. He also installed a learning institute where many crude Arab learned and became scholars. On behalf of these attempts many scholars acquainted with Imam Ali (A.S) administrative and governance knowledge urged world leaders to follow the path of Imam in order to maintain peace and just governance in their part. (Jawad, 2017)

Objective

A Qualitative Study and Perspective that primarily focused on the analysis of Caliphate administrative system and secondarily, stresses upon the superiority of Just system imposed by Imam Ali A.S.

Hypothesis

Due to qualitative nature of study the hypothesis to check the strength of administrative system imposed by Imam Ali (A.S) under his rule and the comparative analysis of changes made in the preceding systems to ensure the independence of judiciary and just decisions made to provide relief to the public in their routine affairs; the hypothesis in this regard will be as follows:

1. Administrative System imposed by Imam Ali A.S was the best just system.

Research method

Data Collection Technique

- Secondary data (Internet, books, journals, and articles), close encounters of historical perspectives and sacred books to come to any point of inference.
- Some debate assistances from the religious cleric to infer any point of concern.

Literature Review

Imam Ali (A.S) as a Statesman and Ruler

Imam Ali (A.S) inherited administrative and governing qualities since his childhood as he was raised by Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and as a first of Banu Hashim tribe child who accepted the Islam and followed the path of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). For this reason, he had learnt the art of governing and administering the state affairs especially from the divine source. Many scholars has stressed upon the point of view that after the martyrdom of Third Rashidun Caliph (Hazrat Usman – May God pleased with him). Ali (A.S) was the rightful and suitable for this position due to his virtue of being a great statesman and Principal advisor to previous Caliphs in many conflicted state affairs. (Kasir, 1987)

When resuming his Caliph office, the Islamic state was not in a peaceful condition at that time as many conflicts, political and socio-economical had been in a verge for the demolition of the state. Thus, he inherited the control of conflicted state. (Modoodi) Thus, counterfeiting with such conflicts he had to streamline the affairs of the state and apparently, Imam Ali (A.S) used his utmost knowledge as referred and guided by Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) “I (P.B.U.H) am the city of Knowledge and Ali (A.S) is its gate” (Bukhari) to turn the conflicts under state control. He (A.S) after resuming his duty (not intentionally but the by the intentions of public) appointed honest governors of every province and define the rules of distribution of wealth principles with equity and delegated the governors with necessary powers to execute them in the light and guidance of Divine source (Quran & Sunnah) on time to solve public affairs honestly. (M. Ali Lakhani, 2006). He also transferred the capital to Kufa from Madinah, to control the affairs in just manners and secondly, he did not want to keep Madinah under state conflicts as it was the center of sacred landmark of true religion Islam and as Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) declared Makkah and Madinah as peaceful and free from bloodshed. (Bukhari)

Political Virtue of Imam Ali (A.S) and His Leadership

Imam Ali did not prefer worldly politics of conspiracies and political foeman ship but in accordance with divine principles (Quran & Sunnah). In his saying he once declared “Alas! It was not for piety; I would have been the shrewdest Arab”. (Reshahari) This designated the viewpoint of Imam Ali (A.S) political virtue and his leadership style. As he had been the nearer and dearest to Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and learnt with him the knowledge of divine principles. His utmost priority was to run the state affairs in the light of Islamic Principles. As referred above Imam Ali (A.S) as a principal advisor to previous three Caliphs. He provided his consultancy and leadership insights in most of the

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contradictory decisions to the previous Caliphs in regards of political and economic opinions. (Alamdar, 2014) Thus, the virtue of Imam Ali (A.S) leadership and political wise is well proven with this.

Economic Wisdom of Imam Ali (A.S.)

As Almighty Allah ordains in the Holy Book Quran (Verse 275, Chapter 2) about the Islamic economic system that he had permitted contract of exchange and prohibited contracts of Al-Riba. (Abbas Mirakhor, 2017). Thus, the Islamic leader of the nation must be well-acquainted with the principles of Sharia and Quran. Imam Ali (A.S) implemented the institution for collection and distribution of taxes (Zakat-Alms, Jizya and land revenue). The first priority of Islamic state leader is to establish such an economic institution which is free from interest, as interest-based exchange of wealth is prohibited in Islam by Almighty Allah in Quran and secondly, the revenue collected should be distributed in terms of equity. i.e. to everyone in equal proportion of distribution. Imam Ali (A.S) under his rule set the example of distribution of wealth in terms of equity and equality among the poorer and collection rules from the richest. (Reshahari) Thus, under these circumstances he sub-divided the distribution and collection proportion into following categories:

Land Revenue Proportion (Rate) for Collection

a.	Most fertile land (1st Class land)	$1^{1/2}$ Dirham per Jarib
b.	Fertile land (2nd class)	1 Dirham per Jarib
c.	3rd grade land	Half Dirham per Jarib
d.	Vine (grapes) yard, Orchards etc.	Ten Dirham per Jarib (1 Jarib = 2269 square yards)

Sadaqa & Zakat (Alps) Rate

It is the tax only paid by well to do Muslims and is levied in accordance to sharia and Quranic principles such as personal income, landed property, hoarded bullions, currency and livestock.

Jizya Rates

It is the tax that is imposed on non-Muslims to pay in for their security in the Islamic state. It was a tax levied on income and property on annual basis. The categories are as under:

a.	1st class (very rich persons and landowners)	48 Dirhams per head
b.	2nd class (Middle class people) `	42 Dirhams per head
c.	3rd class (Businessmen)	42 Dirhams per head
d.	4th class (General Public)	12 Dirhams per head

(The imposition of jizya was kept non-applicable for people over 50 years and below 20 years, all women folks, disable and insane persons)

Distribution Policy and Heads

Income from the Source of Zakat (Alps) and Sadaqa

The income gained from the source of Zakat (Alps) and Sadaqa was reserved into following categories for distribution:

- Administration for the department of collection and distribution.
- Grants, donation and aids to poor, destitute, orphans etc.
- Stipend to volunteers who fought in battles for state. (new)
- Pensions for widows, orphans of soldiers and retired soldiers.
- To acquire and set free of slaves from bondage.
- Reparation of government loans. (new)
- Assist Haji's in performing religious duty.

Land Revenue Distribution

The income gained from this source was reserved for maintenance of courts, offices and miscellaneous items.

Jizya Revenue and Distribution Heads

The expenditure of Jizya tax was reserved for following heads:

- Maintenance of Army.
- Construction and maintenance of forts.
- Construction and maintenance roads and bridges.
- Sinking of wells.
- Construction of Inns. (https://www.imamali.net/?id=2487, n.d.)

Imam Ali (A.S) as a Great General or Commander of the Faithful

Besides establishing the economic policies for the state, he also implemented the policies that strengthened the defense structure of the state. He divided the armed forces institution into two categories to ensure the safety of the state property and as well public. i.e., infantry / platoons[2] and secondarily, local cavalries[3]. Moreover, he strengthened the administrative structure of the armed forces. He has the ability to motivate, lead and convince his forces for the true cause as he had learnt the art of administering from Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). He also designed policies that motivate his team to work for his cause not intrinsically but spiritually. (Jamil, 2015). As being the part of great Islamic battles along with Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) he earned many titles such as complete faith (kull-e-eman), the Lion of God, The Sword of God (Saif-ullah) etc. and with this distinction he has the abilities to dispose of his duties as a great general. Being acquainted with the war tactics, He also passes on his virtue to his follower to continue his cause of

[2] Responsible for the defense of boundaries of the state deployed with Army headquarters in each province.
[3] Local police who were responsible to ensure public property safety.

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providing justice and peaceful environment to his natives such Malik Ashtar, who was also considered by Him as his substitute in conversation, character and action. This made his cause more valuable to the followers of creating and implementing the imposed into their spirits and making sure of deliverance of administrative policies to the needful and as well for elites. (Alloo, 1975)

Imam Ali (A.S.) as a Jurist

The judicial viewpoint of Imam Ali (A.S) was establishment of state affairs institutions on the ground of Truth and Justice. At once, he addressed his companion Malik Ashtar (when authorized him as governor of Egypt) that God is the supreme Lord over the Caliph (Lakhani, 2010) this significantly stresses upon the establishment of state on the basis of principles prescribed in Holy Book Quran. In his and previous Caliphs rule he had pronounced the verdicts on such conflicted cases which astonished every well-versed person as mentioned earlier that Imam Ali (A.S) himself personally acquired the knowledge bank from the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and his virtue and status of being a great just decision announcer had been established in past rules, therefore, he also motivate and convince his companions in every campaign or sermon not to neglect justice in the state affairs and also strengthened the judicial structure of the state such as deploying provincial courts headed by Qazi and session courts that the easy availability of justice to the public should be ensured and the independence of judiciary. He also addressed about counterfeiting organizational injustice that one who sees it with his own eyes and kept silence and doesn't agree with it, care only of himself. One who is not agree with it by speaking, must have a reward and will be having higher rank of first one and one who does not agree with it by his blade and his sword for Allah thus, the discourse of oppressors wiped out and his heart will be enlightened with prosperity and enshrine. (Moghimi, 2019). Thus, an Islamic state establishment must be fulfilled with the principle of Justice. Imam Ali (A.S) dedicated his whole life for justice and he always raised his voice against the oppressors. In his statement, he once said; "to have mercy with the cruel, is indeed cruelty with the innocent." (Hussain) Thus, the prime objective of Imam Ali (A.S) administrative system was to provide right to the rightful and he had assured in every aspect of governance matter.

Findings

From the conducted research study, following points of inference has been incurred:

1. A democratic government system must ensure to make justice as the basis of governance.
2. Islamic democratic system is the solution of all political conflicts as Quran & Sunnah guides the golden principles for a just system of governance.
3. The imposed system of Imam Ali (A.S) in his regime was perfectly in accordance to Quran and Sunnah principles. As he already said in his sermon in Nehjul Balagha that the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) are the rightful heir for Caliphate and they know the art of interpretation of revelations of Quran.
4. The administrative system of Imam Ali (A.S) had a prime objective of rightful distribution of authorities and wealth to the right one. As the Holy Book Quran ensure

the stability and prosperity of economic system only in equal distribution of wealth and assets.

5. As an upgrade in the system, Imam Ali (A.S) introduced first time an accounting system to keep updates of Bait-ul-Maal assets and he also declared the share of each and every rightful heir of income owner.
6. The system was completely based on justice so it was pronounced and declared by many scholarly well-versed clerics as the just system ever seen after the establishment of Islamic society in Madinah. That under the rule of such system none of the needy one sleep with hunger and none of the elite was robbed from his keep.

Suggestions

From above inferred points it is suggested for the democratic governments to imply the fair and just system that ensure the safety and preservations of the rights of the people. Especially, the weaker or the less privileged who hardly found any comfort in their lifestyle. And most importantly, a fair system based on "people government for the people, by the people" i.e., work in the best interest and welfare of the people. This could only be done through fair and just distribution of wealth and assets. A taxation system that follows equity and based on equality as discussed in the above economic reforms, must be imposed to ensure the fair and just distribution of wealth. The independence of judiciary is a must with fair trial system imposed and judgment on fair basis which ensure the reliability and easy reach of justice to the rightful claimant. Under this administrative system all the political and social conflicts can be undone with base priority of justice and equality of genders. A centralized system with residuary autonomy to provinces on lower level (Local Representatives from the Locals) to ensure the deliverance to the people on easy basis. Through this, decision making process will be rapid in providing quick deliverance to the rightful. And last but not the least, the system imposed on the golden principles described in Quran and Sunnah. Such system shall never go in vain at any circumstance.

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